

D-761

Galestown Council No. 51, Junior Order of
United American Mechanics Lodge
Galestown
c. 1913

Although in deteriorating condition, the former Galestown Council No. 51 Lodge of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, is a distinctive early twentieth century structure that defines the center of this small rural village situated on Gales Creek in southeastern Dorchester County. Dating around 1913, the building was initially erected to house a shirt factory, and shortly afterwards, was it doubled as a lodge hall. The partial concrete block construction on the first story points to the building's use as a factory with a measure of protection from fire provided by the fire-proof concrete block walls. The second floor was used as a meeting hall, which was accessed by means of an exterior staircase and second floor door on the northeast corner of the south side. The building retains its essential exterior character and is distinguished by a commercial style storefront entrance with recessed double doors and flanking display windows. This is the last commercial building to define the center of Galestown, which was a prosperous mill village and market town during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

On February 6, 1912, Elon W. and Ida R. Bell sold a small parcel of land across the street from their two-story Victorian house to George E. H. Wheatley. During months the followed, George E. H. Wheatley financed construction of a shirt factory on the lot, using mass-produced concrete blocks. Whether the shirt factory business was a success or not is unclear, however he transferred the property in January 1914 to the Galestown Council No. 51 of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics for \$375, a sum that indicates an improvement was made to the property under Wheatley

ownership. The 1914 deed identifies the property as "all that house and lot known as the shirt factory." It appears that in order to provide the necessary meeting space, the membership of the Galestown Council No. 51 raised the roof of the shirt factory to its two-story height, including an exterior staircase on the southeast rear corner. The Junior Order of United American Mechanics lodge membership retained ownership of the building until 1936.

The Junior Order of United American Mechanics was established in Philadelphia in 1853, initially as a youth order of the parent organization, the United American Mechanics which was founded eight years earlier in 1845. The fraternal organization of builders spread across the country in the years that followed with small memberships surfacing in various towns and villages across the peninsula. While the national organization is still active, most local councils on the Eastern Shore disbanded years ago, principally as a result of competition with other fraternal organization for members. In Galestown, the Rescue Lodge No. 155 of the International Order of Odd Fellows was established in October 1913 and survived for sixty-five years. The Junior Order of United American Mechanics functioned as a service organization of builders who shared common commitment and sense of duty to quality craftsmanship as well as beliefs in the freedom of religion and separation of church and state.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-761

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Galestown Council No. 51, Junior Order of United American Mechanics
other "The Shirt Factory"

2. Location

street and number Galestown Road not for publication
city, town Galestown vicinity
county Dorchester

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Gregory L. Ruark and Barbara J. Ruark
street and number 29243 West Line Road telephone
city, town Delmar state Maryland zip code 21875

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber MLB 489 folio 749
city, town Cambridge tax map 36 tax parcel 94 tax ID number 01-009451

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other:

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: storage	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. D-761

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The former lodge of the Galestown Council No. 51, Junior Order of United American Mechanics, also known as "The Shirt Factory," stands on the east side of Main Street in the center of Galestown, Dorchester County, Maryland. The two-story, two-bay by four-bay concrete block and frame structure is covered by a steeply pitched metal roof laid over wood shingles. The first story of the rectangular structure consists of smooth faced concrete blocks, whereas the second story is frame sheathed with weatherboard siding. The second floor is lighted by six-over-six sash windows. The building is currently used as a storage facility and is showing signs of deterioration. Facing southwest, the gable roof is oriented on a northeast/southwest axis.

Built around 1913, the two-story, two-bay gable-front structure is built half of smooth faced concrete blocks on the first story and frame wall construction on the second. The second story is defined by plain weatherboard siding pierced by even rows of six-over-six sash windows. An exterior staircase on the south side, now gone, led to a four-panel door that provided to the second floor spaces. The rectangular structure is covered by a metal roof laid atop a layer of wood shingles.

The southwest (main) elevation is a symmetrical two-bay façade featuring commercial storefront type display windows on each side of a recessed double-door entrance. The double leaf doors are partially glazed and topped by a two-light transom. The multi-pane display windows to each side rest atop sections of knee wall finished with diagonally set tongue-and-groove beaded boards. The first story is sheltered by a shed roof porch supported by plain posts and resting on a poured concrete slab. The porch ceiling is sheathed with beaded tongue-and-groove boards as well. Defining the second story is a pair of shuttered six-over-six sash windows. A single six-over-six sash window pierces the gable end. The edge of the roof is finished with an extended eave and sloped soffits.

The south side is a four-bay elevation, although the first story is only pierced by small rectangular window openings close to the top of the concrete wall surface. The mass-produced blocks are smooth faced with a simple inset molded edge around each block. An exterior concrete block stove chimney rises in a central position on the south wall. Six-over-six sash windows flanked by louvered shutters light the second story, which was accessed by an exterior staircase attached to the northeast corner, rising to a four-panel door.

The north wall is similarly detailed with small rectangular opening across the top of the concrete wall surface and six-over-six sash windows lighting the second story.

The interior was not seen.

8. Significance

Inventory No. D-761

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Although in deteriorating condition, the former Galestown Lodge No. 51 of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, is a distinctive early twentieth structure that defines the center of this small rural village situated on Gales Creek in southeastern Dorchester County. Dating around 1913, the building was initially erected to house a shirt factory and shortly afterwards it doubled as a lodge hall. The partial concrete block construction on the first story points to the building's use as a factory and the measure of protection that the non-combustible material provided. The second floor was used as a meeting hall, which was accessed by means of an exterior staircase and second floor door on the northeast corner of the south side. The building retains its essential exterior character and is distinguished by a commercial style storefront entrance with recessed double doors and flanking display windows. This is the last historic commercial building to define the center of Galestown, which was a prosperous mill and market village during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

On February 6, 1912, Elon W. and Ida R. Bell sold a small parcel of land across the street from their two-story Victorian house to George E. H. Wheatley for \$15.¹ During the following months, George E. H. Wheatley financed the construction of a shirt factory on the lot, using mass-produced concrete blocks to form the single-story walls. Whether the shirt factory business was a success or not is unclear, however he transferred the property in January 1914 to the Galestown Council No. 51 of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics for \$375,² a sum that indicates an improvement was made to the property under Wheatley ownership. The 1914 deed identifies the property as "all that house and lot known as the shirt factory." It appears that in order to provide the necessary meeting space, the membership of the Galestown Council No. 51 raised the roof of shirt factory to its two-story height,

¹ Dorchester County Land Record, WLR 4/563, 6 February 1912, Dorchester County Courthouse.

² Dorchester County Land Record, JFD 34/267, 13 January 1914, Dorchester County Courthouse.

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Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

including an exterior second floor entrance on the south side. The Junior Order of United American Mechanics Lodge membership retained ownership of the building until 1936.³

The Junior Order of United American Mechanics was established in Philadelphia in 1853; initially as a youth order of the parent organization, the United American Mechanics, which was founded eight years earlier in 1845. The fraternal organization of builders spread across the country in the years that followed with small membership surfacing in various towns on the Eastern Shore. While the national organization is still active, most local councils on the peninsula disbanded years ago, principally through competition with other fraternal organizations. In Galestown the Rescue Lodge No. 155 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was established in October 1913 and survived for sixty-five years.⁴ The Junior Order of United American Mechanics functioned as a service organization of builders who shared a common commitment and sense of duty to quality craftsmanship as well as beliefs in the freedom of religion and separation of church and state.⁵

³ Dorchester County Land Record, JFD 34/634, 31 October 1936, Dorchester County Courthouse.

⁴ Nancy C. Wheatley, *The History of Galestown*, typed manuscript, c. 1984-85, p. 7.

⁵ Junior Order of United American Mechanics website sponsored by the George Washington Council #67 of Wilmington, North Carolina.

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Continuation Sheet

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Galestown Council No. 51, Junior Order of United American Mechanics
Galestown Road
Galestown, Dorchester County, Maryland
Chain-of-title

Map 36, Parcel 94

MLB 489/748

Clifford S. Jenkins and Shirley M. Jenkins

to

6.26.2002

Gregory L. Ruark and Barbara J. Ruark

PLC 173/285

Edgar D. Wooten and Maggie P. Wooten

to

3.29.1972

Clifford S. Jenkins and Shirley M. Jenkins

Lot No. 1 "The Shirt Factory"

RSM 108/279

Clarence H. Corkran, Jr.

to

1.31.1958

Edgar D. Wooten and Maggie P. Wooten

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Name Galestown Council No. 51, Junior Order of United American Mechanics
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

JFD 34/634 Galestown Council #51, Order of United American Mechanics, et al.

to

10.31.1936 George W. Maston, Jessie Lillian Maston

"All that house and lot, formerly known as "The Shirt Factory" situate, lying and being on the street running through Galestown, in the village of Galestown....

JFD 34/267 George E. H. Wheatley and Georgia L. Wheatley

to

1.13.1914 Galestown Council No. 51, Order of United American Mechanics

\$375.00 "all that house and lot known as the Shirt Factory"

WLR 4/563 E. W. Bell and Ida R. Bell

to

2.6.1912 George E. H. Wheatley

\$15.00

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Dorchester County Land Records, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

Junior Order of United American Mechanics website sponsored by the George Washington Council #67 of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Wheatley, Nancy C. *The History of Galestown*, typed manuscript, c. 1984-85.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 4536 square feet

Acreage of historical setting 4536 square feet

Quadrangle name Sharptown, MD-DEL. Quad.

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this surveyed property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

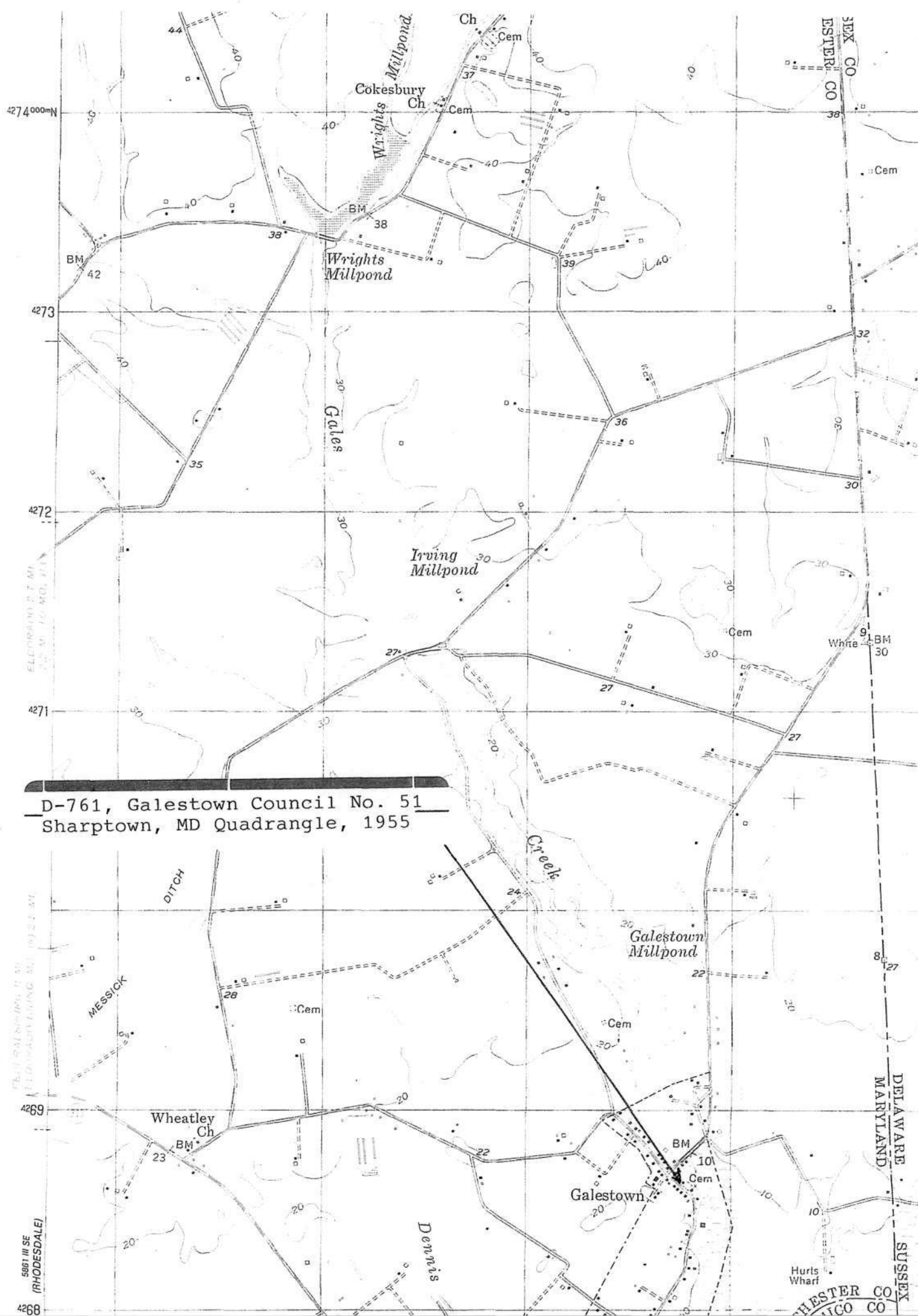
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	3/17/2008
street & number	Cedar Hill, P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600



D-761, Galestown Council No. 51
Sharptown, MD Quadrangle, 1955

4274 000 N
4273
4272
4271
4269
5961 III SE
(RHODESDALE)
4268

SEX CO
ESTER CO
DELAWARE
MARYLAND
SUSSEX
CHESTER CO
HURTS WHARF



D-761

GARSTOWN COUNCIL NO. 51, JUNIOR
ORDER OF AMERICAN MECHANICS LODGE

GARSTOWN, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

3/08, PAUL TOWART, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEQ./MD. HISTORICAL TRUST



D-761

Galestown Council No. 51, Junior
Order of American Mechanics Lodge
Galestown, Dorchester Co., MD.

NORTHWEST ELEVATION

3/08, Paul Touart, PHOTOGRAPHER

WEG/ MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

2/2